

August 14, 2020

Issue #18

**Art Therapist
and Counselor,
Sibel Ozer**

The
Crazy Wisdom
Weekly

shining a light in the dark



Published by the *Crazy Wisdom Community Journal* during the Pandemic.

The Crazy Wisdom Weekly

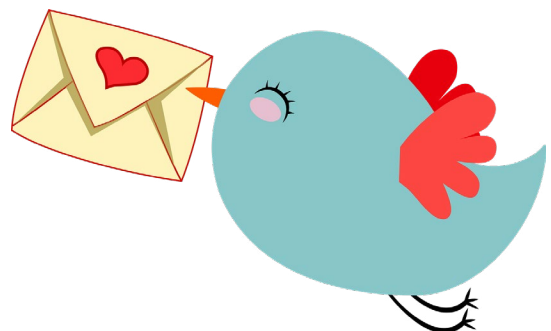


[Click here!](#)

Birdsong is one the best things about warmer weather in Michigan, but if you are in within the city limits, it's sometimes hard to enjoy the birds without the background noise of cars, buses, and the children playing down the street. So grab a cup of tea and enjoy this wonderful recording of the birds from a quiet spot in your home.

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Healing Nectar Arts

Compassionate Self-Care Cards & Posters



Created by: Evelyn Ann Barber, an educator of over 30 years, with a MA in Human Development, Leadership in Education, a BA in Child Development, and is a Certified Child Life Specialist. She is a passionate voice in education and healthcare settings and advocate for the health and wellbeing of children and families. Learn more at healingnectararts.com

Compassionate Self-Care Cards and Posters are designed to offer a gateway for people to explore and share their experiences and emotions while building connections of trust and safety for healthier life skills, coping skills, and relationships one person at a time. The cards include positive affirmations and open-ended questions to promote healthy mental and emotional self-care.

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Thank you to our contributors for this issue:

Randall Andrews
Katie Hoener
Rev. David T. Bell
Sibel Ozer
Angela Madaras
Carol Karr
Sarah Newland

Jennifer Carson
Bill Zirinsky

word of the week:

Amanuensis

Someone skilled in the transcription of speech; a literary or artistic assistant, in particular one who takes dictation or copies manuscripts.

Because of Covid-19, we didn't publish our usual springtime *Crazy Wisdom Community Journal* in mid-April. We will publish our fall issue on schedule. In the meantime, we created a weekly online version—short, and lively, and perhaps a mild distraction for our local and regional readership. We welcome articles, interviews, recipes, wisdom, personal essays, breathing exercises, favorite places for socially distant walks, news of your dogs, whatever. Send your submission to Jennifer@crazywisdom.net.



By Randall Andrews

Most people would agree that falling is a bad thing. It's certainly true for those of us who wait tables. Going down with a trayful of omelets can mean messes, bruises, frustrated customers, and worst of all, angry cooks.

If you're a fellow runner, however, you may understand how falling can sometimes be beneficial. And maybe not only for running.

For many years, I maintained the faulty assumption that I already knew how to run. I learned how to walk at an age beyond memory, and as I grew up, I picked up the pace, stretched out my stride, got a little air underneath me. Voila. Running. What could be simpler?



For many years, I maintained the faulty assumption that I already knew how to run.

For me, it quit being simple when I started dabbling in longer distance races. You can fare pretty well if you're young and fit and know how to push yourself, even with poor form . . . for three miles. For thirteen miles, not so much. For twenty-six, not at all.

Following my first half marathon (13.1 miles), I spent four days descending stairs backward, and then four months gimping around on a sore knee. In my infinite wisdom, I decided to spend the next summer training for a full marathon (26.2 miles). Because if you know half a pizza is too much to eat, why not

try to push a whole one down, right? You can guess how that worked out.

A decade into the sport, I was struck by the outrageous notion that I should actually learn about running. It was a sadly belated realization, I admit, but better late than never.

It turns out that for many of us, running doesn't come so naturally after all. Not anymore. Certainly, our ancestors looked different chasing prey across the plains than we do in hot pursuit of the ice cream truck.

Giving up shoes and avoiding artificial surfaces didn't seem like a viable option for learning, so I turned to the great font of modern wisdom: YouTube. It took a bit of sorting, but there was qualified advice to be found. And I did some reading, too.

As I studied, I was surprised to find falling mentioned repeatedly as a component of good running form. I'd fallen during runs before, but never on purpose, and never with any apparent benefit. Skinned knees and lost seconds were what I associated with falling while running.

Of course, that's not the kind of falling we're talking about. The concept of falling into your stride refers to something much subtler, a slight shifting of your center of mass that increases efficiency by maintaining momentum.

Gravity is a force that's easy to take for granted. That is, except at mile twenty-five of a marathon when your body weight seems to have mystically tripled. Gravity is always there, though, pulling you down, holding you back. But here's the thing—in that split second when you're falling, gravity is actually pulling you forward. If you can stretch that moment out, maintain that feeling of falling while keeping your feet turning beneath you, then you can make gravity work for you instead of against you.

It's easy to draw metaphors between running and life. Over the years, I've come across dozens in my reading. Here's one more.

FALLING, CONTINUED

The direction of our lives, both in the long term and the day to day, is affected by a great variety of forces. Some we can influence or avoid, but others, like gravity, are inescapable and beyond our control. Likewise, there are times when going against the flow is a good thing, necessary even. But not all the time. It's not good to be a salmon, always fighting our way upstream because that's where our instincts push us. Not every force requires a counterforce.



But here's the thing—in that split second when you're falling, gravity is actually pulling you forward.

In much the same way that we can make an ally of gravity while running, we can recruit other forces to guide us through life. Those little shoves and tugs are coming at us all the time, warning us when we've lost the path, or urging us in a new direction. They're easy to miss when we're busy and distracted, and for many of us, that's practically a steady state. Even when we do hear those whispers, we're apt to respond to them with our inner salmon, opposing them automatically, creating conflict where none need be.

I think I'm doing better with the running. I've become aware of gravity, and of my own center of mass. I've learned how to find and maintain that feeling of falling, and thank goodness. Now that I'm what the race community euphemistically refers to as a *masters runner* (40+), I need all the help I can get.

As to navigating those other, quieter currents . . . I'm working on it. It's not easy, but neither was changing my stride. I'm a work in progress, as are we all, and progress is my goal.

Randall Andrews is the author of two books, [The Last Guardian of Magic](#), and [Finding Hour Way](#), a collection of novellas about navigating life with time travel. Learn more on his website, thelastguardianofm.wixsite.com.



Yoga

pose of the week

PARSVOTTASANA — PYRAMID POSE



By Katie Hoener

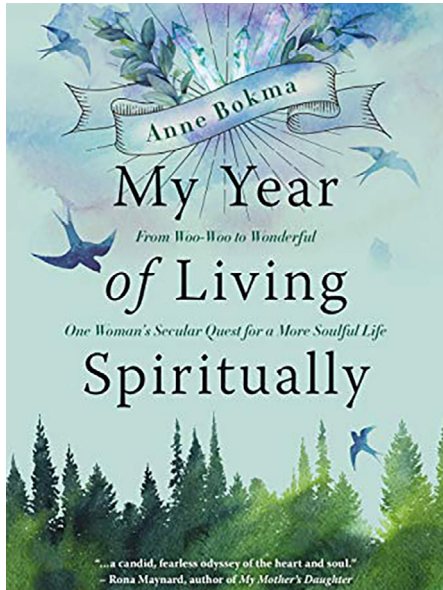
Pyramid pose is a great “all around” posture. It is a tremendous back-body opener, as well as a whole body strengthener. I have found that this level of grounding, lift, and release, have been a wonderful addition to many practices in terms of stress reduction and overall well-being.

To come into Pyramid pose, we often come in from Warrior One, first bringing the feet parallel to one another, and then a little bit closer together. We straighten both legs without locking them, keeping the knees supple, and the strength of the posture coming from the legs. On an inhale, we rise up with the arms. We fold, long through the spine, and we can pause half-way, with the arms out in front (as shown). From here we can also allow the hands to come to the earth, or to the shin. This can be an intense opener for the hamstrings, so find a fit that works for you. Often times, we flow in this posture, letting the arms come by the side on the exhale, and inhale powering through the feet, and floating the torso and the arms back up toward the sky. This is quite a dynamic expression of the posture that incorporates both engagement and release of the muscles. Decide whether today is a better space for a flow or for a hold!

Katie Hoener is the Yoga Columnist for The Crazy Wisdom Community Journal. She is an RYT 500, receiving her 200 and 500 hour trainings. She is a partner at [Verapose Yoga](#) in Dexter. Please send in your yoga questions to Katie@veraposeyoga.com.

Crazy Wisdom Book Pick of the Week

By Sarah Newland



My Year of Living Spiritually: From Woo-Woo to Wonderful—One Woman's Secular Quest for a More Soulful Life by Anne Bokma

In 2017, Anne Bokma embarked on a quest to become a more spiritual person. After leaving the fundamentalist religion of her youth, she became one of the eighty million North Americans who consider themselves spiritual-but-not-religious, the fastest growing "faith" category. In mid-life she found herself addicted to busyness, drinking too much, hooked on social media, dreading the empty nest, and still struggling with alienation from her ultra-religious family. In response, she set out on a year-long whirlwind adventure to immerse herself in a variety of sacred practices—each of which proved to be illuminating in unexpected ways—to try to develop her own definition of what it means to be spiritual.

In *My Year of Living Spiritually*, Bokma documents a diverse range of soulful first-person experiences—from taking a dip in Thoreau's Walden Pond, to trying magic mushrooms for the first time, booking herself into a remote treehouse as an experiment in solitude, singing in a deathbed choir, and enrolling in a week-long witch camp—in an entertaining and enlightening way that will compel readers (non-believers and believers alike) to try a few spiritual practices of their own. Along the way, she reconsiders key relationships in her life and begins to experience the greater depth of meaning, connection, gratitude, simplicity and inner peace that we all long for. Readers will find it an inspiring roadmap for their own spiritual journeys.

[Purchase a copy of My Year of Living Spiritually at shopcrazywisdom.com.](https://shopcrazywisdom.com)

From Our Blog

Forgiveness

By Rev. David T. Bell

Forgiveness is one of the most important tools in raising one's consciousness. It is a critical necessity in moving out of the past and dwelling in the present moment. Many live outside the present moment, either reliving past woundings, resentments and traumas, or fretting about future problems that have not yet arisen. In truth, there is only the eternal moment of now. If one is reliving the past or fretting about the future, then one cannot be in the present moment. Life literally passes by without notice.

In addition to taking one out of the moment, unforgiveness has the effect of reliving, often in painful detail, all of the previous wounds and losses. This actually creates a negative energy, which directly influences the body's immune system as well as the endocrine system. Harboring old grievances can actually make a body sick. Toxic energy and negative emotions are the direct cause of "dis-ease." That is, the sense of not being at ease, as well as the actual causal vector of disease. The best question to ask at this point is, "Why would you do that to yourself?" If one is skillful and interested in spiritual growth the answer is obvious. You wouldn't!

Toxic energy and negative emotions are the direct cause of "dis-ease." That is, the sense of not being at ease, as well as the actual causal vector of disease.

Many have not learned of the connection between resentment and disease. Many have been taught that there are "unforgivable sins." Such is not the case. In *A Course in Miracles*, the modern communication of spirituality and psychology, we are told "forgiveness is our only function." The Course also says that there is no sin. Hanging on to old wounds is practically the worst idea ever. It takes away your peace, and has the real possibility of causing disease. Forgiveness then, is something you do for yourself. It is never about the other. It is a tool to restore your peace, tranquility, and health.

One source of resistance to forgiveness is the notion that it sends a message that harm is okay. Forgiveness in no way condones what was done. It simply is an acknowledgment that the forger is ready to move beyond resentment and to understand that everyone is always doing the best that he or she can in any circumstance. Does this mean that you must like the person forgiven? Not at all. There is no requirement that you should take an abuser to lunch. In fact, it is perfectly reasonable to say "STOP IT." Allowing further harm to take place is not a loving thing to do. However, anger and resentment only harm the holder of those emotions. Confucius had this to say: "To be wronged is nothing, unless you continue to remember it."

[Read more on our blog.](#)

SHAPEshifting

By Sibel Ozer

Bertold Brecht says that the aim of science is not to open a door to infinite wisdom but to set a limit to finite error. Psychology as a social science can't afford to close its doors to wisdom as its subject matter is perpetually searching for meaning. Wisdom offers both meaning and understanding in a way knowledge simply can't.

We ought never be surprised when we find ourselves (or someone else) acting in a way that appears irrational. I could argue that our periodic lack of rationality is in fact what makes us most human. Rollo May says that "we all think of ourselves not in moral or rational categories but rather as central characters in the drama of life."

What resides in our unconscious is as much a part of who we are, and how we behave, as what makes up our consciousness. The language of the unconscious is imagery. The rules by which it functions are mythical. Science seems to lag behind the arts in its grasp of the paradoxes inherent to humanity. The psyche expresses itself through symbol and metaphor that can best be understood through stories, as stories allow for the unknown. Stories tolerate mystery.

There is a plane of existence within our beingness that includes our dreams, our imagination, and our capacity to visualize while awake (what Jung refers to as active visualization, and Shamans know as journeying). This space holds all manners of beings that do not exist in the physical world, even as they are very much a part of human reality.

My first experience of shapeshifting happened during a drumming circle at a time when my now fluent and articulate 21-year-old had just started stuttering. I remember being utterly distraught thinking about the rest of his life shaped by his speech impediment, thinking of all the ways and places he would struggle. I had not yet been introduced to mindfulness, and it didn't occur to me that imagining the future would increase my suffering tenfold.

We think we prepare ourselves by imagining the worst possible outcome, when in fact we suffer needlessly based on a hypothetical future, which is often way worse than reality.

Around that same time, one of my teachers from the Cleveland Gestalt Institute offered Shamanic drumming circles. A well-facilitated drumming circle can enable a shift in consciousness helping one to enter journey space where the rules of science don't apply. Jung developed a process called active visualization to help his patients benefit from what this space has to offer.

As I lay on the mat with worries about my son weighing heavy on my heart, I found myself in a large meadow surrounded by

a herd of buffalo. Instead of fearing for my safety like a rational person might, I felt myself drawn toward this majestic animal and let my curiosity lead me forward. I was mysteriously able to get closer and closer until I entered the buffalo, somehow becoming one with the animal, able to see the meadow through its eyes.

The most interesting part of the experience was how the worries in my heart started shifting / lifting as I myself had shapeshifted. In buffalo form, I somehow knew that my son would be okay, which I hadn't been able to accept from other resources, and many had tried. I remember a teacher saying it might be a phase, our therapist saying speech therapies would help, and friends assuring me all would be well in time. None of these had decreased my worries with any significance, and yet in some mysterious way, my shapeshifting into a buffalo had had this marvelous effect on my entire being. Watching the endless meadow through the animal's vision filled my body with a sense of calm, and my mind with a knowing that all would indeed be well in the end. There is no way I can rationally explain such a transformation. As a trauma therapist I could theorize that this seemingly mental activity involved my body, and the process of change happened similar to what somatic psychotherapies facilitate.



Another influential shapeshifting experience happened during another drumming circle when I found myself on my favorite beach in Turkey with an urge to enter the water. The inexplicable part of this one was how I was able to breathe while diving deeper and deeper as I had transformed into a sea turtle. The most interesting part of this dive was what it helped me feel into.

Like most of you, I know that we are all free, theoretically, that we can change our lives in small or large ways any time we want, and that there are often valid reasons (excuses?) that prevent us from doing so. Sometimes the list of obstacles in the way of a desired change is way longer than the possibilities. Sometimes the obstacle is that we don't even know what we want at a deep soul level.

At the time of this journey experience, we had just moved to the US on a limited visa, had little money and no access to loans, and my mind was set in the direction of a doctoral degree. I had been hearing an ad about an art therapy program on the radio and would notice being tickled by the idea of pursuing it. I don't think I would have ever moved in that direction if it weren't for the experience of the turtle. It simply was too far-fetched a concept to allow serious deliberation.

The experience itself is nothing extraordinary when I put it into words. A simple occurrence of swimming in the depths of the Mediterranean, I was making basic decisions about which way to swim based on what I felt like at the moment. And yet, I can say in all honesty that I hadn't ever tasted the feel of true freedom before that. And I don't remember tapping into it since then with the same clarity. Coming back onto land and out of journey space, I knew that I wanted to become an art therapist. I also knew that I would make this happen no matter what the challenges I had to overcome. It took another nine years in real life for me to become fully qualified. It was possible despite the many hurdles because it was aligned with my deepest desires and the clarity of my intention. Intent is indeed everything.

Themes of shapeshifting continue to come up in my Art of Allowing practice. As paintings remind me of the legends and myths of women changing into birds, or seals changing into women, I am invited to pay attention to the changes my deeper Self is asking of me.

Not all change has to be life altering. Regular change and adjustment is essential for a psyche that wishes to remain awake and vibrant, as the mind's tendencies to habituate and disconnect us from our deepest desires (life purpose) are hard at work inside our mind. Rumi warned us about them years ago:

*The breezes at dawn have secrets to tell you
Don't go back to sleep.
You must ask for what you really want
Don't go back to sleep.
People are going back and forth
Across the doorsill where the two worlds touch;
The door is round and open
Don't go back to sleep.*

The pandemic has forced us all to change how we function on a societal level. The shapeshifters in my paintings are inviting us to make sure that we don't miss this opportunity to make some inner changes as well. Listen deeply to what you really want, change entirely if need be, or try something new if nothing else is possible. Transforming an emotion, changing a thought, a belief, or an old story can also be thought of as shapeshifting.

The shapeshifter archetype exists to teach us about the difference between living and surviving. As Jonathan Livingston Seagull says:

*You need to keep finding yourself,
a little more each day,
that Real Unlimited You*

Sibel Ozer is a licensed professional counselor and board-certified art therapist currently doing private practice in downtown Ann Arbor. Visit sibelozer.com for more information. Or read more of her writings [on our blog](#).

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COMFORT FOOD

By Angela Madaras

Hearty Baked Beans

Makes 10 servings

Ingredients:

- 1 Tbs Vegetable oil
- 1 Smoked Hock or ½ pound pork belly
- 1 Large yellow onion, peeled and diced
- 1 Green bell pepper, seeded and chopped small
- 4 Large cloves chopped garlic
- 1 Pound cooked beans (white beans, butter beans, pinto beans all work well)
- 1-28 oz. Can of diced tomatoes including juice
- 2 Cups chicken broth or any broth you have on hand
- 1 Cup sugar beet syrup or unsulfured molasses
- ½ tsp freshly ground black pepper
- ½ tsp crushed red pepper
- 1 tsp ground cumin
- 1 tsp chili powder

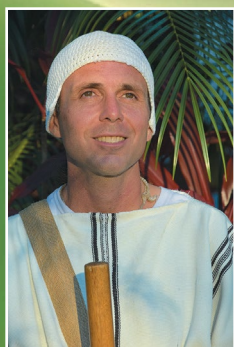


I use an insta-pot for this but you can cook it slow in a crock pot or a Dutch oven in the oven.

Sautee vegetables in oil until translucent. Add all ingredients and cook per directions for Insta-Pot or Crock. If you are using a Dutch oven, bake at 375 degrees for two hours. When it's done let sit covered for a few minutes. Take out hock and pull off any usable meat to place back into the pot. Serve beans with rice and whatever sides you prefer. You can add heat with hot sauce of your preference. This is a great dish to take to an outside picnic while socially distancing.

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TAROT CARD OF THE WEEK

SUIT OF CUPS



WATER

By Carol Karr

The Suit of Cups Tarot cards deal with the emotional level of consciousness and are associated with love, feelings, relationships, and connections.

Cups are associated with the element of water. Water is fluid, agile, and 'in flow,' but it is also very powerful and formative. It can be soft and gentle, like waves lapping against the sandy shore, or it can be powerful or even forceful, like a raging river.

Cups Tarot cards indicate that you are thinking with your heart rather than your head, and thus reflect your spontaneous responses and your habitual reactions to situations. Cups are also linked to creativity, romanticism, fantasy, and imagination.



Shamanism

Shamanic Animal Healing • September 15 • 7 p.m. • In seven weeks, explore unique perspectives for animal healing that draw upon core shamanic practices as well as other traditions. Students will develop a toolkit of techniques within a supportive, interactive, and experiential learning framework of instruction from a professional animal communicator who also practices shamanism. Pre-requisite: students must know how to journey. Knowledge of animal communication not necessary. Class is online every Tuesday for 7 weeks. Fee is \$325/\$280 if paid by Sept. 1, 2020. For more information contact Judy Ramsey at 734-665-3202 or ramsey.judy003@yahoo.com or visit her online at Judyramsey.net.

Meditation, Yoga, and Martial Arts

Myriad of Meditations • August 16 and August 23 • 6:30 p.m. • Meditation is an essential component to spiritual evolution. Learn a myriad of meditation techniques, to discover which resonate for you (possibly dissolving years of resistance to meditation). Learn meditations with fire, water, air, earth, with the Four Worlds, with different breathing, with Holy Geometry, sacred letters, powerful Archetypes, spiritual beings, qualities of G-D, with movement, music, toning, colors, scents, gemstones, and trees, including several guided meditations through the Tree of Life.

Qigong Meditation Basics 1 ONLINE • August 22 • 9:30 a.m. • Qigong Meditation Basics is where it all begins: Fundamentals of Qigong and Qigong Meditation. Learn the basics of qigong for improving one's physical health and emotional body. Stabilize, ground, and detox negative emotional energy. This coursework also provides an entry point into exploring the spiritual dimension of qigong (refines the body and spirit, part of spiritual immortality training) that continues with Fusion coursework. Supports Chi Nei Tsang Abdominal Healing Therapy practices and those interested in Tai Chi or physical body improvement qigong. Fee is \$195 for 4-days, Aug 22-23 and Aug 29-30. For more information email Steven Sy at steven@spiritualtao.com or visit spiritualtaoworkshops.com.

Spirituality

The Faith That Time Forgot • August 20 • 7 p.m. • This will be an online weekly class series based on my book "The Faith That Time Forgot." Purchase of the book is not required for the class, but is encouraged. The class series will offer alternative perspectives on spirituality from a feminist viewpoint. More information is available on our website at magdalenrose.org.

The Crazy Wisdom Calendar

weekly

Health and Wellness

Creating Personalized Bath Collection • August 23 • Noon • Choose from a massive collection of essential oils to create your own personalized bath collection to take home, to awaken, to believe in yourself, to help move you closer toward your life's purpose, for purity, for clarity, to envision, for inspiration, to surrender, for acceptance, for hope, for joy, for gratitude, for humility, for courage, for love, for clearing, for energy, for creativity, and for abundance. For more information call Karen Greenberg at (734) 417-9511 or email krngrnbg@gmail.com, or visit their website, clair-ascension.com.

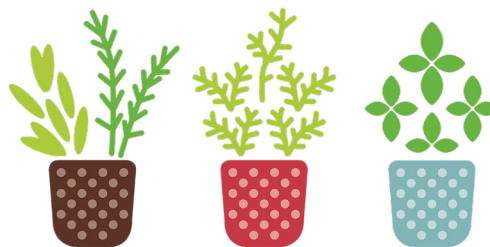
Online Workshops

D.O.V.E. Divine Original Vibration Embodiment System Training (Karen Greenberg's Clair-Ascension Kabbalistic Balance) • August 14 or August 21 • 10:00 a.m. • After studying D.O.V.E. System manual, learning to identify and repattern client's limiting beliefs, thoughts, attitudes, and patterns, and assisting client in expressing any commensurate low-vibrational emotions, through the Tree of Life, learn to Kabbalistically balance client's energy via art, movement, music, toning, sound, aromatherapy, gemstones, sacred symbols, connecting with G-D, Archangels, Angels, Masters of Light, trees, powerful Archetypes, and more. For more information call Karen Greenberg at (734) 417-9511 or email krngrnbg@gmail.com, or visit their website, clair-ascension.com.

Weekly Zohar (The Book of Radiance) Study • August 16 • 8 p.m. • Explore the hidden and mystical meanings concealed in the Old Testament (Torah); deepen your spiritual knowledge, awareness, consciousness, and connection. For more information call Karen Greenberg at (734) 417-9511 or email krngrnbg@gmail.com, or visit their website, clair-ascension.com.

Get your calendar listings in by Monday morning at 10 A.M. for the next Crazy Wisdom Weekly Issue!

[Send your listing in here.](#)





**Our greatest freedom is the
freedom to choose our attitude.**

—Viktor Frankl